

15 surviving veterans returned to their homes in Scott County. This first pilgrimage was made in three horse drawn buggies to three different cemeteries.

Mr. Speaker, this Memorial Day weekend, it is important we honor and pay tribute to all who have served or are currently serving in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard and Merchant Marines. At a time when we have thousands of men and women still in harms way in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is essential we all take a moment to remember their great service and sacrifice.

The annual Memorial Day Pilgrimage of the Scott County American Legion Post 24 is a truly wonderful way to honor the men and women of the Armed Forces. I am sincerely grateful for their efforts.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. DONALD A. MANZULLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 25, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1815) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2006 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2006, and for other purposes:

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Chairman, I thank Mr. HUNTER, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, for including my amendment in the en bloc package.

It is the intent of Congress and in the interest of national security that we maintain a strong and healthy industrial base if we are to remain the strongest nation on Earth. Even the founder of modern-day capitalism and free trade, Adam Smith, recognized the need for a nation to be able to depend upon its own industrial and agricultural base and not rely on foreign sources for its defense needs. We cannot maintain our role as global leader on a pure services-based economy.

This amendment strengthens the Buy American Act, BAA, by restoring the original intent that more than 50 percent of the components in end products purchased by the Department of Defense shall be mined, produced, or manufactured inside the United States.

The Buy American Act originally passed Congress during the Great Depression. The intent of Congress was that to qualify under the Buy American Act, a company had to have substantially all of a product made, grown, or mined in the United States. However, regulations implementing the Buy American Act have subsequently redefined "substantially all" to mean simply greater than 50 percent.

Yet even that regulation has been weakened even further over the years. The Pentagon has used the "public interest" exception to waive the Buy American Act to treat the purchase of some foreign goods as if they were made in America. The original intent of the Buy American Act has been undermined by procurement memoranda of understanding, MOU, and other agreements with various foreign countries that permit the substitution of foreign components for components mined, produced, or manufactured inside the United

States. These are not treaties or trade agreements approved by Congress—these were Executive Branch agreements not subject to review by Congress.

Thus, the Buy American laws are basically worthless. There are so many holes in the law that it means nothing when a company says they comply with the Buy American Act. The exception—and it's a big one—is that the domestic content requirement doesn't have to be met if the items are procured from certain designated countries.

The Pentagon has MOUs with 21 developed countries that waive the Buy American Act because the Defense Department has determined that, for these countries, complying with the BAA is "inconsistent with the public interest." Basically, a company getting an award from the Pentagon can claim compliance with the Buy American Act without having to actually make anything here, as long as the components come from one of the 21 countries.

Too often, agencies claim they need the best for the least, implying that Americans can't make the best or compete on price and quality. But "best value" is the standard, which means price shouldn't be the reigning factor. The best value for Americans is to have a strong industrial base and we can't do that if DOD forces U.S. companies to compete on price with foreign companies that are owned, subsidized, or controlled by their governments.

It is important to remember that this amendment does not increase the share of the Buy American content, but simply codifies the content percentage of what is in existing regulation.

HEROES EARNED RETIREMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2005

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my support for H.R. 1499, the Heroes Retirement Opportunities Act. This important legislation allows military personnel serving combat zones to deduct contributions to their individual retirement plans.

The brave men and women of the United States armed forces risk their lives to defend our freedom and to continue the war on terror. These outstanding individuals are called upon to be stronger, braver, and tougher than they ever thought possible.

It is our duty to reward the men and women who risk their lives for our country, and the Heroes Retirement Opportunities Act accomplishes that goal. This bill will protect as much of their pay for the future as possible.

I know first hand the sacrifices our service men and women make. My husband retired 1st Lieutenant Dexter Lehtinen, was wounded in the Vietnam War by a grenade that almost took his life. Soon my stepson, Aviator 1st Lieutenant Douglas Lehtinen, is preparing to deploy to Iraq. I am certain that he will meet individuals who, like his father, have paid a tremendous price to uphold our ideals of freedom and democracy. By passing the Heroes Retirement Opportunities Act, we can do our part to assure a more certain future for those who risk their lives to protect ours.

To all the brave men and women who have served and now serve in our armed forces . . .

Thank you, on behalf of a grateful Nation.

TOM WOOD: LABOR LEADER OF THE YEAR!

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2005

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, today I acknowledge a great friend of labor, Tom Wood—named the "Labor Leader of the Year" by the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council, AFL-CIO.

Tom began his career as a Distribution Clerk with the United States Postal Service as a member of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU—Local 197) in January 1972. Within six months, he became a Shop Steward and started representing employees' rights. He noticed that other employees needed representation because they were too shy to represent themselves; he then became involved in assuring that employees would be treated fairly and justly.

In 1974, Tom was elected as Clerk Craft Director and subsequently has represented the APWU in several capacities since: Secretary-Treasurer, Executive Vice President and as the President of his Local Union since 1990. He has been the APWU chief negotiator for all local contracts for San Diego represented employees, and has made it a point to see that all postal managers treat employees with dignity and respect. Tom has established a reputation of vigorously representing his members, while still being responsive to the needs of the employer and their constant struggle with the "budget."

Tom has served as a member of the Board of Directors on the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council for the last fifteen years and as President since 2004. Several years ago, under his leadership, the APWU began looking with other labor unions in town to buy their own property, and became partners with the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council, AFSCME, HERE, CWA and IATSE in Mission Valley's United Labor Center.

Congratulations Tom Wood, on your recognition as "Labor Leader of the Year"!

HONORING THE LIFE OF SERGEANT JACOB SIMPSON

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2005

Ms. HOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, let us recognize the life and praise the sacrifice of an American Hero.

Just a few days ago, Sergeant Jacob Simpson was killed in action during a reconnaissance patrol in Iraq.

Jacob died as he lived—helping the people of Tikrit in their efforts to secure a peace, and realize their aspirations for a democratic society. Oregon mourns his passing. As a society we have too few of his character; we will all feel his loss for years to come.

Jacob was an exceptional young man who possessed a kind heart, an inquisitive mind, and a dedication to family and friends that was as uncommon as it was devout. After completing his general education studies, Jacob entered the United States Army to build a new life for himself. Sergeant Simpson was a proud, dedicated soldier; he was a team player, always willing to volunteer for an extra job, a hard assignment—but he was so much more.

He was a patriot—an earnest young man who believed citizenship meant responsibility. Jacob Simpson accepted the duty of being an American as freely as he did its freedoms. True to his nature, Sergeant Simpson used his time in uniform to adjust his focus, investigate his academic interests—to develop a plan for rest of his life. Jacob planned on attending college after his discharge.

But Jacob will never again enjoy the winds of the Columbia Gorge, the view of Mount Ashland, or the sounds of his guitar. He returned to Iraq for a second tour of duty well aware of the challenges, the risks, and dangers. He gave his last full measure of devotion keeping faith with his charge.

Jacob Simpson never faltered, never wavered, and never failed—he understood his duties and sacrificed everything he had, and everything he never would have, for the ideals of liberty. His courage is a lesson for us all.

In his brief twenty-four years, Jacob Simpson made a difference in the lives of thousands. With hope, determination, and uncommon valor—Jacob helped blaze the trail for a new generation of Iraqis to have the right to choose a new destiny.

It is now up to us left behind, here—to ensure the life and death of Jacob Simpson is remembered—to keep its promise. Let us recommit ourselves to the tasks at hand. We must never forget.

TRIBUTE TO DONALD “DONNIE” YOUNG

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2005

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of my constituents, Donald “Donnie” Young, a Denver policeman who tragically lost his life in a senseless act of violence earlier this month.

Detective Young was 43 years old, a devoted husband and a father. He was a 12-year veteran of the Denver Police Department and a recipient of the police Medal of Honor. Fellow officers remembered Donnie as a well-liked, friendly man with a care-free attitude who adore his family. He was a running back on the police football team and an avid Harley motorcycle rider.

His tragic death has saddened and will continue to be felt by the entire Denver community. He will no doubt be sorely missed by all, and most of all those who knew and loved him.

On behalf of the House of Representatives, I want to take this time to express my deepest sympathy and heartfelt condolences to Mr. Young's family and friends.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

RECOGNIZING THE COAST GUARD, THE COAST GUARD AUXILIARY, AND THE NATIONAL SAFE BOAT- ING COUNCIL

SPEECH OF

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2005

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my support of H.R. 243, and to recognize the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the National Safe Boating Council for their efforts to promote National Safe Boating Week.

I represent Florida's 18th District, and a large portion of my Congressional district is surrounded by water. To many of my constituents, and to many Floridians, boating is a way of life. National Safe Boating Week reminds us that even the most experienced boater must always be attentive and vigilant to prevent accidents that hurt or kill thousands of Americans each year. The National Safe Boating Council deserves our thanks for its public education efforts.

The Coast Guard's mission is not limited to our home waters. Numerous Coast Guard vessels are deployed to U.S. Central Command in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, including two 110-foot patrol boats from South Florida—the USCGC *Baranof* and the USCGC *Maui*, each with 22 personnel aboard—are currently deployed in Bahrain and patrol in the North Arabian Gulf.

I join the citizens of South Florida in saluting the bravery and dedication of the men and women serving in the United States Coast Guard who are keeping the American people safe and who are defending our freedom both at home and abroad.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KENNY C. HULSHOF

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2005

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, on May 19, 2005, during consideration of H.R. 2361 the Fiscal Year 2006 Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, I inadvertently recorded my vote as “No” on the amendment offered by Mr. BEAUPREZ to increase funding for Wildland Management (Rollcall Vote No. 195). It was my intent to record my vote as “Aye” on this amendment.

IGNORING INTERNATIONAL LAW: NIGERIA'S CONTINUING PRE- SENCE ON CAMEROON'S BAKASSI PENINSULA

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2005

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to the continued failure of the Nigerian Government to respect international law regarding Cameroon's Bakassi Peninsula.

In October 2002, the International Court of Justice overwhelmingly held that the Peninsula rightfully belongs to Cameroon. As a result, the ICJ demanded that Nigeria rapidly and unconditionally remove its military, police, and civilian officials from Cameroonian territory. Almost three years later, Mr. Speaker, Nigerian military forces are still on the Bakassi Peninsula.

Nigerian President Obasanjo recently has taken some admirable steps to combat corruption and advance democracy in his country. On this key issue, however, Nigeria has been less than forthcoming. At the outset of the Bakassi dispute, President Obasanjo promised that Nigeria would abide by whatever decision the ICJ reached. It has not. After the ICJ decision, Nigeria promised that it would withdraw all of its troops by September 2004. It has not.

Mr. Speaker, President Bush recently declared that the United States recognizes and respects its obligations to the International Court of Justice. We must ask for nothing less from Nigeria and our other friends in Africa and around the world.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZA- TION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 25, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1815) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2006 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2006, and for other purposes:

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, under the current Administration, waste, fraud, and abuse in federal contracts have proliferated. No-bid contracts have soared. Oversight of federal contracts has often been turned over to private companies with blatant conflicts of interest. Billions of dollars have been squandered on contracts that enrich private companies but provide little or no benefit to the taxpayer.

Yesterday, at the Rules Committee, I offered an amendment to the Defense Authorization Bill to help restore integrity to the federal contracting process. The amendment would have prohibited contractor conflicts of interest and stop the use of abusive “monopoly contracts.” It would have also ensured greater transparency and accountability. I am deeply disappointed that the Rules Committee refused to make the amendment in order and allow an open debate on this important issue on the House floor.

This Administration now relies on oversight contractors with conflicts of interest. In March 2004, the Defense Department awarded seven contracts to help oversee the implementation of a larger number of Iraqi reconstruction contracts. One of the oversight contractors, CH2M Hill, has ongoing domestic contractual relationships with three of the four firms it oversees: Washington Group International, Fluor, and AMEC.

My amendment would have ensured that oversight contractors are truly independent, without any business or contractual relationships with the companies whose contracts they are helping to assess.